

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
OCEAN DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2380

ANSWERED ON:03.12.2002

DISCOVERIES MADE BY NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF OCEAN TECHNOLOGY

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Will the Minister of OCEAN DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

- (a) whether it is a fact that the National Institute of Ocean Technology had indicated a likely pre-Harappan civilization:
- (b) if so, the basis for the exploration:
- (c) the steps being taken to conduct further research in the matter:
- (d) the discoveries made by the National Institute of Ocean Technology during the last two years:
- (e) whether any new findings in respect of ancient civilization have come to light; and
- (f) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT, MINISTER OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND MINISTER OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT (DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI)

(a,b & c) The National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT), Chennai of the Department of Ocean Development (DOD), Government of India had during the course of under water surveys in the Gulf of Cambay, Gujrat during October, 2000 to March, 2001 come across a stretch of formations typical of a riverine regime in the middle of the sea at 30-40 m water depth. An area of almost 9 km. Stretch west of Hazira in Gujrat appeared to be lined with well laid house basement like features partially covered by sand waves and sand ripples. The Side Scan Sonar deployed for the survey picked up images which indicate several geometric objects that are normally man made.

During subsequent surveys in November - December, 2001 various objects were picked up from the sea bed. Among the objects collected, the carbonized wood pieces were taken up for dating using C14 technique in the Birbal Sahni Institute of Palaeo Botany, Lucknow and in National Geophysical Research Institute, Hyderabad. The preliminary results reveal that the age of the wood samples dates back to 7500 B.C.

These results and some of the objects collected were made public in a Press Conference on 16th January, 2002. Further detailed surveys, studies & investigations would need to be done in the area by multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional teams to conclusively establish the period of settlement.

(d): As a follow up, a workshop was organized on 1st July 2002 at NIOT campus, Chennai which was attended by about 50 eminent personalities belonging to different fields like archaeology, geology, geo-morphology, geo-chronology and marine technology. Based on the recommendations in the workshop, several organisations and institutions were asked to give proposals pertaining to the expertise that will be of importance to the Gulf of Cambay marine archaeological findings.

(e & f): Recently in October, 2002, NIOT has carried out the further surveys wherein several interesting samples have been collected which are under various studies and examination.